

INTRODUCTION

Survey Objectives

The objective of the 1999 Study of Public Attitudes Toward and Understanding of Science and Technology was to build on nearly two decades of experience in the design, conduct, analysis, and interpretation of the public understanding and attitudes studies conducted for *Science and Engineering Indicators* and to continue to produce an accurate, high-quality, and timely report for *Science and Engineering Indicators* 2000. The terms of RFP SRS 99-002 called for the replication of the 1997 study, with a few minor variations. The 1999 study was conducted under contract from the Division of Science Resources Studies of the National Science Foundation. Professor Jon Miller served as principal investigator for the 1999 study at the Chicago Academy of Sciences. The telephone interviews included in the study were conducted by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC).

Design Overview

The design of the 1999 Study of Public Attitudes Toward and Understanding of Science and Technology called for a replication of the 1997 *Science and Engineering Indicators* study, with only a few minor variations. Telephone interviews were conducted with 1,884 adults¹. One additional question was added to the 1997 questionnaire to probe for additional information about the public's understanding of DNA (see Appendix A for the questionnaire used in the 1999 study).

SURVEY DESIGN

Survey Instrument Summary and CATI Development

NORC preparation for this Random Digit Dial (RDD) survey began with a kickoff meeting and discussion of the 1999 survey instrument and procedures on March 3, 1999. Study preparation ran approximately three weeks, and included programming the new version of the instrument into a Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) environment, selecting the sample of telephone numbers, designing the Telephone Number Management System (TNMS) for the survey, mailing out advance letters, and training interviewers to conduct the interviews.

Changes to the 1999 Instrument

The 1999 questionnaire had several minor changes from the 1997 version and one new question regarding DNA. (See Appendix A for the English version of the instrument.) In the preamble the phrase "For quality purposes, this call may be monitored" was added in compliance with the Federal and state

¹ Two respondents were dropped from the final analytic file due to non-response on critical items, leaving the final analytic file with 1,882 cases.